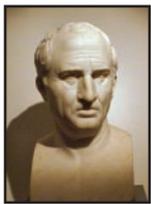




Motivation

What motivates you to feel successful in life? Is it power, money, possessions, the love of your spouse or family? According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, money is a motivator; however its motivating effect is short lived. At higher levels of the hierarchy, praise, respect, recognition, empowerment, and a sense of belonging are far more powerful motivators than money. I have seen in my own life and throughout my career that Maslow's hierarchy of needs is critical to our desires and feelings of success. If you cannot provide the basic security for yourself, your loved ones and your employees, you cannot have self respect, respect for others, and therefore you cannot attain the higher goals of love, self esteem/recognition, achievement, and then self actualization.



"We are all motivated by a keen desire for praise, and the better a man is, the more he is inspired to glory."—Cicero

There are two motivating categories. Intrinsic motivation is motivation driven by an interest or enjoyment of the task itself. There are many intrinsic motivating basic desires that guide all of us: from the basics of food, shelter, and clothing to acceptance from our peers, spouse and family, we need order in our lives. As a husband and primary provider, I know that it is critical for me to give my wife and my sons that basic sense of well being and security. If I cannot provide security (and in a recessionary period all of us are stressed to the max to ensure that we provide such security for our family and employees),

then they cannot feel secure in their own lives. People need to feel safe and loved.

Extrinsic motivation comes from outside of the individual. Common extrinsic motivations are rewards like money and grades, coercion, and threat of punishment. Competition is in general extrinsic because it encourages the participant to win and beat others. Achieving a promotion or getting a reward for sales person of the month are also extrinsic incentives. When we receive positive reinforcement for our hard work we are motivated to work harder and do better for ourselves, our families, and our companies.

Entrepreneurs cannot constantly motivate and keep track of an employee's work on a daily basis. Goals are therefore an important tool for owners, since goals have the ability to function as a self-regulatory mechanism. Goals activate cognitive knowledge and strategies which allows owners to cope with the situation at hand. In this way, a goal is of vital importance because it facilitates an individual in focusing their efforts on a specified path.



"First say to yourself what you would be; and then do what you have to do."—Epictetus

People will perform better when they are committed to achieving certain goals. We are motivated by goals no matter how large or small. Positive emotions can broaden modes of thinking, which in turn

can improve ways of coping with a current stress. The entrepreneur in America is constantly fighting an uphill battle. Coping with the stresses of running a business can either make you or kill you. You might fail. So what? A winner must first know what failure is before he or she can enjoy success. The more obstacles you overcome, the stronger you become.

"They fail, and they alone, who have not striven."—Thomas Bailey Aldrich

In life nothing is certain, nothing is perfect. Just rise above the challenge. Life is a game of chess, learn to live it wisely. The greater the challenges that we face, the more noteworthy the motivation will be in our lives.



"We are all inventors, each sailing out on a voyage of discovery, guided each by a private chart, of which there is no duplicate. The world is all gates, all opportunities."—Ralph Waldo Emerson

We must be motivated to succeed in life. Failure might occur, but it is never permanent. Whatever you are not changing, you are choosing to live by. Always move forward to the positive aspects of your life. Never accept mediocrity.

"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom." - Ecclesiastes 9:10